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FOUNDED BY ARTHUR MEE

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FLIGHTS OF FANCY

Speeding Discs, Mysterious Rays, and the Snow Men of Tibet

Recently the whole world has been discussing the so-called "Flying Saucers," mysterious objects reported to have been seen hurtling at great heights through American skies. Here a scientific correspondent has something to say about Flying Saucers and some other queer things which in their time were just as much a Nine-Day Wonder.

A NUMBER of all too "well-informed observers" in America reported from posts in Michigan, New Brunswick, New Orleans, Ohio, and Quebec that they had seen disc-like objects flying through the air at great heights and enormous speeds.

The reports of these "flying saucers" in the sky soon spread to Australia, and more seekers for them found them as they looked for them.

A Californian lady said she saw a great silvered disc with five smaller ones following it like chickens which presently took cover beneath mother's wing!

Nothing so impressive as that was seen in Australia, but 22 students at Sydney University saw flying saucers in numbers of agreeable diversity. They were, in fact, taking part in an experiment conducted by Professor F. S. Cotton, the physiologist, who in commenting on the reports from the United States invited his students to co-operate in a test. He instructed them to look at the sky, fixing their gaze on one point in it and standing quite still.

Ten minutes later 22 students reported that they had seen objects in the sky. This was just what Professor Cotton had expected. The objects were really due to the effect of the red corpuscles of blood in a strained eye passing in front of the retina. Anybody could repeat the experiment for himself. Melbourne University agreed with him, adding that the flying saucers were an example of collective illusion.

The Strange Rays

Such illusion is well known in science, and one of the most remarkable examples comes from science itself. At the beginning of this century, when rays of every kind were much in the air—Becquerel rays, Röntgen rays, and others—Professor R. Blondlot of Nancy University discovered the N-rays, so named in honour of his university. They were supposed to be rays which were emitted by bodies in a state of strain by compression, or in hardened steel, and unannealed glass, and other bodies in a state of a strained equilibrium of their molecules.

He rode this theory to death, literally. He stored them, he dispersed them, he tried to polarise them, and he wrote a book about them. The book is on a CN bookshelf with a phosphorescent plate to enable the effects of them to be seen. Seen they appeared to be, for hundreds of papers were written about them by the seekers.

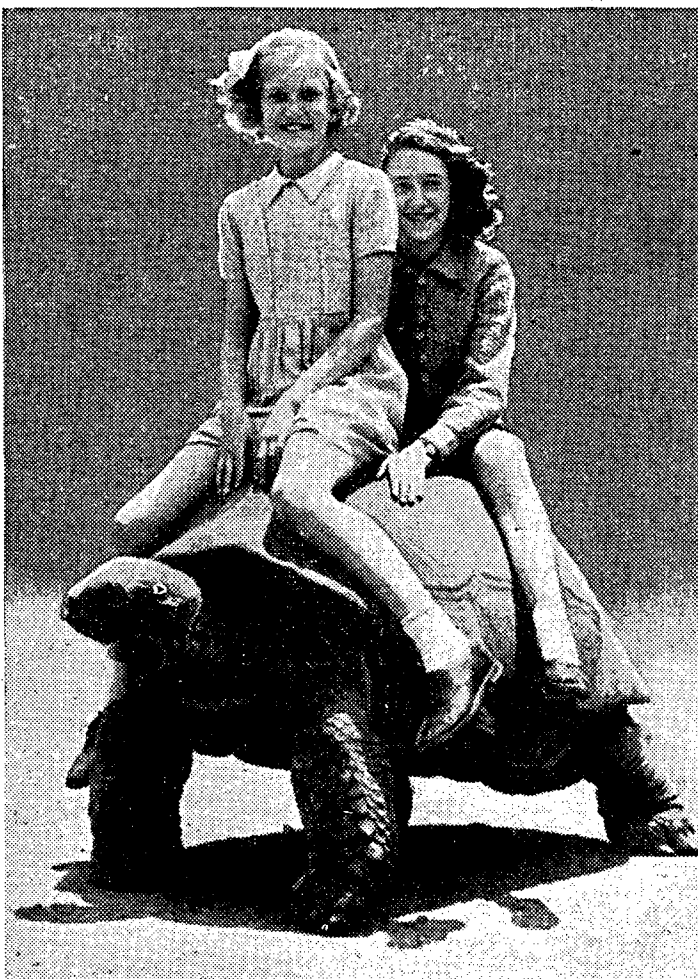
Optical Illusion

Then a certain German professor, a doubter, succeeded in proving beyond doubt that it was an optical illusion, due to the fact that a strained eye perceived what was not there. His proof was the death blow. The N-rays disappeared as if they had never been (as, indeed, they never were) and served only, to illustrate a scientific warning that in seeking we must be careful lest we find only what we want to find.

Other examples not so direct as this one might be quoted. There was the myth of the "Abominable Snow Men" of Tibet, whose footprints Professor Pocock, F.R.S., showed were those of one of the lesser known Himalayan bears; as well as the age-old legend of the sabretoothed tiger in an English cave, which he declared was as likely to have been a lion.

So let the Flying Saucers steal away silently as they will. At least they are a change from talking about the weather, for that is always with us.

SLOW BUT SURE



For two South African girls visiting the Pretoria Zoo the novelty of riding on a giant tortoise compensated for the lack of speed.

Pride of Clyde

A SALUTE FROM THE ROYAL NAVY

THIS is a great week for the people of Clydeside; the biggest naval review in the history of the Clyde is being held there, and on Tuesday and Wednesday the King and Queen and the two Princesses are visiting the Fleet.

This assembly of about 108 warships is a wonderful spectacle. The wide estuary of the Clyde off Greenock and Gourock seems nearly covered by men-o'-war, for it is about five miles from one end of the Fleet to the other.

At Their Birthplace

The visit of the Fleet is a gesture of thanks from the Admiralty—and one in which the whole nation heartily joins—to the shipbuilders of the Clyde for their splendid wartime effort. Several of the fighting ships present at the Review were built in Clydeside yards, including the battleship Duke of York, Flagship of the Home Fleet, and another magnificent battleship, Howe. Of the 32 destroyers present, ten were Clyde-built. Two of the three sloops first floated on the Clyde. Both of the submarine depot ships, four of the 19 submarines, and other vessels have also returned to salute their famous birthplace.

Altogether there are three battleships with the Fleet in the Clyde, for the Anson is anchored in company with the Duke of York and the Howe. Near them are the aircraft-carriers Vengeance and Illustrious, the last-named being the great ship which enemy dive-bombers could not sink at Malta in 1941.

The streets and houses of the Clydeside towns are gay with flags this week and many arrangements have been made for the entertainment of sailors who come ashore; for there are about 20,000 officers and men with the Fleet. Hostel accommodation has been provided for them and several schools have also been taken over for this purpose. Dances and parades are being held, there are displays by the Naval men, and the sailing clubs of Clydeside and of the Fleet itself are holding regattas.

Lucky Scouts

Clydeside Boy Scouts are particularly lucky; special arrangements have been made for them, and members of other Youth organisations, to visit some of the ships. The Royal Family will go aboard several of the warships and walk round Divisions—the parade of the ships' company—and see the demonstrations. On Wednesday afternoon the Royal Family, in a motor torpedo boat, will pass through the lines of ships, cheered by the sailors lining the decks.

Well may the hearts of Clydeside citizens swell with pride—pride in the ships they made, and pride in the deeds of the sailors who man them!

EARLY BIRD



When a small boy dashes eagerly through the school gate there must be a reason. In this case the little Australian must be early because it is his duty to drum-in the rest of the pupils at his school in Melbourne.

Broadcasting to the Eskimos

WHEN the Canadian Army's "friendly voice of the Arctic" radio station CHAK at Aklavik goes on the air, more than 200 receivers in tents, trappers' cabins, native dwellings, and prospecting camps are tuned-in, because a listener never knows when there is liable to be a personal message for him.

Greetings are sent to men living in remote and isolated places; trappers and natives are recalled to Aklavik in cases of sickness; items of local interest are passed on; and any interesting piece of news picked up on

short wave is re-broadcast. Church services broadcast in English, Eskimo, and Loucheux Indian are a popular Sunday feature with both whites and natives.

The station also boasts a library of more than 200 records for request items, and Eskimos do not seem to mind listening when a lonely prospector has asked for a bit of boogie-woogie!

Radio station CHAK is run by members of the Royal Canadian Signals, who also operate a short-wave station forming a vital link in the North-West Territories and Yukon Radio System.

Buying an Estate to Get a Tree

CHARLES SLADE, of Leura, a little township in the famous Blue Mountains of New South Wales, collects trees just as some of us collect stamps. He has hundreds of them, of all kinds and shapes, growing on his property. His most interesting specimen, however, is an American Blue Spruce, the only one of its kind in the state; and to acquire it he bought a whole estate, transplanted the tree to his own collection, and then sold the estate!

It happened in this way. One day Mr Slade noticed the young Blue Spruce growing on the

property of Judge Edwards of the NSW Supreme Court. Upon inquiry, he found that the judge, too, was an earnest botanist who had imported the Spruce and had no intention of selling it.

Mr Slade bided his time, taking occasional walks past the judge's property to keep an eye on the tree. Then, one day in 1934, the judge died. Mr Slade managed to buy the whole estate, and, with the help of his gardener, transplanted the eight-foot tree to his own land. The Blue Spruce is now thirty feet high, and the pride and joy of its owner.

ITALY'S POST-WAR TROUBLES AND HOPES

THE Italian people are now doing all they can, as Mr Churchill urged them, "to work their passage back" to democracy, and their Government was one of the first to accept the British and French invitations to join the conference in Paris to discuss the Marshall Plan for European recovery.

The recent history of Italy has shown that no Government, not even one whose strength would seem unlimited, can triumph over the will of the people. Almost 25 years ago, in October 1922, a group of ruthless trouble-makers, led by the disgruntled Mussolini, seized power in Italy. Although Mussolini succeeded in staying in power for 21 years and even led the country into a disastrous war, he was not able to cut the deep ties linking the Italian people with this country and other Allies.

Mussolini was not successful, either, in stifling the traditional Italian love of liberty and democracy. This is shown by the fact that in a short time after Italy's surrender tens of thousands of valiant partisans in the occupied part of the country rose in arms to help the Allies. Many thousands of them died in battle. Free or under occupation these Italians gave the British and American armies all the help they possibly could.

As soon as the war ended the last remnants of the Fascist regime were swept away. King Victor Emmanuel, who was com-

promised by the Mussolini Government, had to go. A free Press arose almost overnight. Trade Unions began to flourish again. Freedom of speech and worship, and the equality of all citizens before the law, were re-established. None of these changes was dictated from above; they came as an expression of Italian democratic faith.

Traditional Friendship

It is important to glance back at these events. They confirm our belief in the strength of the sources of civilisation which are deeply rooted in Italian soil and which we share with the Italians; and they confirm belief in the traditional friendship of our two peoples. We rub shoulders with the Italians in many places. Italy maintains a key position in the Mediterranean, which is a lifeline of the British Commonwealth; and her hostility to us, inspired by Mussolini, was a source of much trouble to us.

Because of her good behaviour since the war there are possibilities that some, at least, of her old colonies may be returned to her and this would make Italy again a neighbour of the British Empire in Africa. But above all it is in commerce that Britain and Italy may profit by mutual exchanges. Italian fruit and other foods help us, and in return Italy presents an excellent market for British goods, particularly heavy machinery, electric installations, and so on.

Machinery Needed

Italy, with its growing population, cannot maintain its own people by farm production alone. She must expand her industries and especially her export industries. To build such factories she must buy abroad much of the machinery needed. But this is not easy just now. Italy suffered heavy war damage, and a number of her factories were destroyed. She is not exporting enough and therefore has not enough foreign currency to buy the necessary goods overseas. Often she is short of foreign exchange to buy raw materials even for factories which are in full working order. These difficulties, moreover, are responsible for 2½ million unemployed Italians. There is inflation of money and many Italians are undernourished.

In view of this rather awkward economic situation it is not surprising that Italy was among the first to accept the invitation of the British and French Governments to discuss the Marshall offer. The Italians believe that if a plan for Europe's economic recovery is worked out they could count on American help; and that would mean an end to the shortage of raw materials, iron ore, coal, machinery, cotton, and other essential goods. Thus, after long years of oppression, the Italians would be able to find democratic freedom linked with economic progress of the whole nation.

Pounds Into Dollars

THE Press of Britain has been widely discussing the problem of our overseas sterling debts. Headlines like Sterling After July 15, and The New Sterling Regime, have been found in almost every newspaper. What is it all about?

During the war a great many of our Allies (ranging from the members of the Commonwealth, such as Australia, New Zealand, and India, to countries like Norway, Iceland, Argentina, and Brazil) helped us in many ways. They supplied us with foodstuffs, guns, ships, and labour for building military roads and airfields and unloading military supplies.

We did not accept these goods and services for nothing. We paid for them in part, and the rest of the sum due was entered into books to Britain's debit. Our debit is, of course, a given country's credit, and the phrase *sterling balances* means the amount which we owe to those Allies after deducting what they owe us. The sterling balances are very large, amounting to about £3000,000,000; and they keep on growing because we keep on buying from those countries.

Repaying Our Debts

These debts must be repaid somehow. Paying in international trade does not really mean paying out money, but supplying goods, machinery, textiles, cars, and so on, which our creditors need badly. The trouble is that Britain cannot produce nearly enough to pay these debts except over a long period.

It is for this reason that we have agreed to let our creditors convert or exchange the sterling balances they can lay claim to into dollars. This way out has been permitted from July 15. Possessing dollars, they can buy things they need in America or other parts of the world.

But only a part of the sterling credits has thus been released, because the principle of convertibility means that we have to supply those dollars; and we are exceedingly short of dollars. By agreeing to give up a part of her dollar supply, however, Britain helps to keep international trade going and at the same time maintains her good will among the nations of the world.

Mountains Under the Ocean

A US National Geographic Society Expedition is to conduct a survey of part of the mountain range beneath the Atlantic Ocean, extending from Iceland almost to Antarctica.

One theory holds that this range is a fragment left when North and South America separated from Europe and Africa, but the society say that the expedition, sailing in the ship Atlantis, does not intend to search for the fabulous "lost Atlantis" continent.

They will dredge samples of the mud and rock from the ocean bed. This will be done by shooting into it tubes 10 to 15 feet long. It is believed that at some places the mud is as much as seven-and-a-half miles thick.

WORLD NEWS REEL

GOOD WILL. On Tuesday this week an RAF squadron of 16 Lincoln aircraft is due to fly the Atlantic to Newfoundland on the first stage of a good will mission to Canada and the United States. On July 28, United States Air Force Day, they are to take part in a mass flight over New York.

The World Trade Alliance Association has announced a \$125,000,000 scheme to increase rice production by mechanised cultivation.

The US Health Authorities have ruled that no person shall enter the United States who has not been vaccinated within the past three years. Shipping companies are providing facilities for vaccination.

BACK ON THE JOB. The Canadian-Pacific transatlantic passenger service has been reopened with The Empress of Canada, the first Canadian-Pacific liner to be refitted as a civilian passenger ship after war service.

Britain is sending four teachers and a Ministry of Education official to represent her at the Unesco Seminar on Education for International Understanding, which is being held in Paris from July 21 to August 30—the first of its kind ever to be held.

FARE BY HEIGHT. Booking offices at all stations on the Chilean State Railways have a beam 4 feet 6 inches high. Full fare must be paid for any child too tall to stand under the beam.

HOME NEWS REEL

YOUNG WORKERS. The Home Secretary has sent a letter to local authorities stressing the importance of strictly supervising the employment of the young. Mr Ede states that forms of employment which might hinder the physical, mental, moral, or spiritual growth of young people must be checked.

Lifboats saved 299 lives round the coasts of Great Britain during the first six months of this year.

It has been decided not to use Ashdown Forest for heavy military training. On the open part of the Forest no live ammunition or tracked vehicles will be used, and there will be no appreciable interference with public access.

FRIENDSHIP. The Children's Committee of The British Soviet Society have compiled an Album of Greetings from British children to Soviet children. It contains paintings, drawings, poems, and essays by children in all parts of this country and will be on exhibition at Friendship House, 15 Devonshire Street, London, W1, from July 27 to August 2 (11 a.m. to 9 p.m.).

YOUTH NEWS REEL

BIRD WATCHERS. To make a special study of bird life, Senior Scouts of Enfield District will in August visit the Calf of Man, an island bird sanctuary off the south-west tip of the Isle of Man. Their equipment includes a cine camera and sound-recording apparatus.

A party of 40 Scouts from Stoke-on-Trent are to spend a fortnight in August as guests of Dutch Scouts at Arnhem.

Twenty-one nations were represented at the World Girl Scout Encampment at Camp Barree in Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

New methods of probing ocean deposits at depths never before reached are to be used by the Swedish deep-sea expedition which recently set out in the motor-schooner Albatross to sail round the world.

RIGHT PLACE TO LEARN. Ten agricultural students from India are learning dairy science at colleges in New Zealand.

The mother of Major Frank Thompson, a British officer who died fighting with the Bulgarian partisans in 1944, was cheered by crowds in Sofia when she arrived there, not long ago, at the invitation of the Bulgarian Government. A Bulgarian railway station has been named after her son.

The first commercial air service between London and Colombo, Ceylon, has started. Handley Page Haltons will fly once a week in each direction.

A FRESH START. The two countries into which India will be divided on August 15, both to be members of the British Commonwealth, will be named the Dominion of India (the Hindus' country), and the Dominion of Pakistan (the Moslems' country). Lord Mountbatten is to be Governor-General of the Dominion of India, and Mr Jinnah is to be Governor-General of Pakistan.

In Paris 16 European countries have been meeting in conference to consider the US offer of economic aid to Europe made through Mr Marshall, American Secretary of State.

Objects of the ATC

MANY thousands of boys have served in the Air Training Corps during the war and in the years since it ended. Now the ATC has a royal warrant indicating clearly what its objects are in peacetime. They are threefold: first, to promote and encourage among young men a practical interest in aviation, and to fit them to serve their country; second, to provide training which will be useful to them in the air services and civil life; and third, to foster the spirit of adventure, and develop the qualities of mind and body which go to the making of a leader and a good citizen.

With their new royal warrant may the ATC go forward from strength to strength.

FOREST SCHOOL

"Down in the forest something stirred" runs the popular ballad; and indeed there was much stirring recently in Ashdown Forest, Sussex.

The stirrers were 40 schoolboys from Collis Road Secondary School, Peckham, and they were enjoying a change of scenery during term time. They spent two weeks with their teachers living in a camp in the forest while studying natural history, agriculture, and forestry. The LCC have announced that similar camps are being formed for other London schools.

TREASURE!

A FOLKESTONE auctioneer who was preparing the property of a customer for sale found an old cigar box in an outhouse crammed with waste and discarded goods. Inside were some silver and copper coins, and, continuing the search, he discovered a hoard of more than £600.

Many years ago another Folkestone auctioneer found a thousand sovereigns while engaged on a similar task. He was the father of the more recent treasure-finder!

The Revd E. S. Loveday, the well-loved Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, has died in Melbourne of heart seizure at the age of 42. He was in Melbourne in connection with his work for the Student Christian Movement.

The Nuffield Organisation exported 52 per cent more cars and trucks in the first half of 1947 than in the first half of 1946.

LAVERGRO. The bomb-damaged grave of George Borrow, in Brompton Cemetery, is to be restored and maintained.

Officers and men of the Royal Navy under 20 are given an issue of lemonade instead of the daily rum issue, it was announced in Parliament recently.

Vanbrugh Castle (Blackheath) School for the sons of deceased airmen, which was closed at the beginning of the war and afterwards damaged by bombs, has been re-opened.

VISITOR. A six-weeks-old grey seal was found stranded on the beach at Felixstowe, Suffolk.

An urn containing 100 Roman coins has been found in a sandpit at Tuddenham in Suffolk.

The Children's Newspaper, July 26, 1947

SCHOOLBOYS' OWN FACTORY

Boys at Handsworth New Road School, Birmingham, have started their own factory, because they decided they need practical experience now to prepare them for when they enter industry.

Within the last few months they have raised over £120 by making Christmas cards, calendars, and by various sales, the money being spent in fitting out their workshop.

Already they have a lathe, many work-benches, a couple of dozen vices, tool boxes, chisels, hammers, files, and saws; and they intend to increase their stock of tools and also to add some pieces of light machinery.

Birmingham Education Committee, recognising a fine progressive spirit, have made a money grant to the boys, which will be spent on more equipment.

PLANT EXCHANGE

MORE than a hundred varieties of seeds of New Zealand native trees and plants are listed in a catalogue of seeds published by the Auckland City Council. The council intend to exchange these seeds with people in other parts of the world. With the seeds it receives in exchange Auckland City will add to its collection of plants from across the seas in the city botanical gardens.

The Ambitious Cow

PASSERS-BY in Curry Rivel, Somerset, recently wondered whether a new type of aeroplane had been invented when they heard strange noises coming from the sky. After searching for long in vain, the source of the noise was traced. At the top of a 150-foot monument was a cow. She had climbed the spiral staircase of the column and was contentedly surveying the village from her vantage point. The animal was brought down backwards to the ground, where her owner made sure that his "cow that wanted to get up in the world" would no more a-wandering go.

YESTERDAY & TODAY



A King's Trumpeter

Riding in processions and sounding fanfares on State occasions, the King's Trumpeters in their gold-braided surcoats are among the most picturesque figures in London ceremonials.



A Danish Demonstration

A party of fifty Danish girls and boys came to London recently to demonstrate physical culture, and here we see some of the girls giving a display before girls of Hornsey High School.

200 Years of Dress

MANCHESTER'S new Gallery of English Costume at Platt Hall, Rusholme, is now open to the public. It contains 1100 complete dresses made in the last 200 years, also 15,000 costume illustrations, 2000 dress accessories, and a large library of fashion magazines and plates. This collection, which Manchester City has acquired from its originator, Dr C. Willet Cunningham, is believed to be the most complete illustration of Englishwomen's dress in existence.

Here the student of our Social History can study the strange dresses that great-grandmother wore and try to understand the mentality of the generation that thought such oddities looked smart; but no doubt a future generation will wonder the same thing about our present-day costume!

THE ZOO IN COLOUR

A COLOUR film of the London Zoo is now being made for the National Savings Committee for the use of schools and mobile savings cinemas. It shows a ten-year-old girl visiting such colourful creatures as peacocks, parrots, and penguins. During the taking of the film a lion attempted to seize one of the cameras.

Sports Scrapbook

THE task of deciding the settings for the 17 sports of the first Olympic Games to be held in London since 1908 has almost been completed. The opening and finishing ceremonies, as well as the athletic, gymnastic, and field sports, will be held in the Empire Stadium; most of the other competitions will be held in or near London, except the equestrian and shooting events which will be staged, respectively, near Aldershot and at Bisley.

Thirty-seven nations have so far accepted the invitation to send teams. America is contesting every event and will have over 400 representatives. Czechoslovakia is also entering for all the events and is expected to send nearly 300 entrants.

SING TAO, a team of Chinese footballers from Hong Kong, are due to arrive in England on August 15 to play a series of matches against many of our leading amateur teams. A Dakota aircraft has been hired for their journey.

THE GOOD FIGHT

DURING the past twelve months the Industrial Christian Fellowship has held about 8000 meetings in factories, clubs, hospitals, and in the open air. Industrial Sunday last April was observed in over 5000 churches.

The Fellowship's plans for the future include the foundation of a training college for lay evangelists, which will be the only one of its kind in England.

The annual report of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, called *Once More Unto the Breach*, price 3d. is an inspiring record.

Stamp News

THE stamp in the picture is among the rarest in the world—only 23 specimens are known to exist, two being in the King's collection.



It is an unused Great Britain King Edward VII ten-shilling stamp, over-printed IR Official. A block of nine of these stamps is to be offered for sale next October by Messrs Harmer Rooke of London. Mr Harmer estimates that the block will be sold for £4000 to £6000.

IN New Zealand more than a million stamps are sold every day, all of them printed in Britain. New Zealand recently ordered from British printers 192,000,000 penny and 240,000,000 twopenny NZ stamps. The first NZ stamp order in 1852 was for 12,000 penny and 66,000 twopenny stamps.

FINLAND has issued a stamp to mark the 60th anniversary of her Post Office Savings Bank. The design shows the figures 1887 and 1947 on either side of a garlanded pillar.

ARCTIC STUDY

AN Oxford University Expedition, consisting of 12 explorers, is visiting Jan Mayen island, north of Iceland. The explorers are to make an intensive study of the natural life and the rock formations of this bleak, uninhabited Arctic island.

Jan Mayen is in the Greenland Sea between Greenland and Norway. It is a volcanic island 34 miles long and nine at its widest. Its highest point is the extinct volcano, Beerenberg, 8094 feet high, whose sides, towering up abruptly from the sea, are covered with glaciers and frozen waterfalls. The island was discovered by Henry Hudson in 1611.

Trunk Call in Tasmania

WHEN Mrs William Andrews of Hobart, Tasmania, heard a knocking at her kitchen door recently there was nothing of an "Open-the-door-Richard-and-let-me-in" touch to it.

A few seconds later the door burst open, half the back wall of the house fell down, and a large-sized elephant came striding through! Mrs Andrews, who was washing dishes at the time, took refuge in the bathroom. From her hide-out she listened to the crash of crockery, the tearing of woodwork, and heavy shuffling steps as the monster moved through to the living-room. A little later he strolled through to the garden by way of the bedroom wall. Then Mrs Andrews emerged.

She was picking her way through the rubble when there was a knock at the front door. Mrs Andrews took a cautious peep. The man outside raised his hat very politely. "Excuse me, madam, but would you have seen Flossie by any chance? She's one of my elephants that escaped from the circus this morning."

HEATING THE FLOOR

ELECTRICALLY-HEATED concrete floors may solve some of our winter problems, when sufficient power is available.

The method has already been used in dairies, piggeries, and factories, the heat being evenly distributed and the concrete floor dust-proofed and painted a flat colour. In offices and homes this would eliminate the need for carpets or linoleum.

Perfect Models

TWO working model engines, with coaches, made by a South African and considered by experts to be the finest models ever constructed, are on view at Paddington Station, London. They have been given to the directors of the GWR by their maker, Mr B. R. Hunt of Johannesburg.

One is a model of the locomotive King George V, with a coach of the Cornish Riviera Express; the other model is of George Stephenson's Locomotion No 1, with the first closed carriage, Experiment. In another case is a display of miniature engine tools.

The models are to be seen on that part of Paddington Station called The Lawn—the circulating area.

THE SECRET OF THE LAKE

THE forward remnant of a Maori war canoe, 40 feet long and in an excellent state of preservation, was recently reclaimed from Lake Rotoiti in Rotorua, New Zealand.

It is believed to be at least 120 years old and to have been placed there during a series of wars that raged between two tribes. Its presence has been known to the Maoris ever since it was placed in the swamp with a "tapu" many years ago. The tapu—meaning Keep Out—has been strictly observed, and when the canoe had to be removed to allow the swamp to be drained no villager would touch it until the tapu had been ceremonially removed.

LOST!

THE officials at the P O Savings Bank headquarters receive some quaint replies from depositors who have been asked to produce their books, as the following example shows:

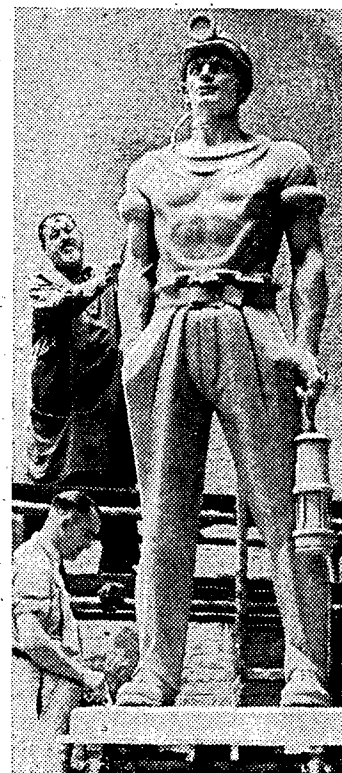
"I have found my book—I have no idea where it was when I lost it; as it was not where it was when I found it."

Schoolboy in a Hurry

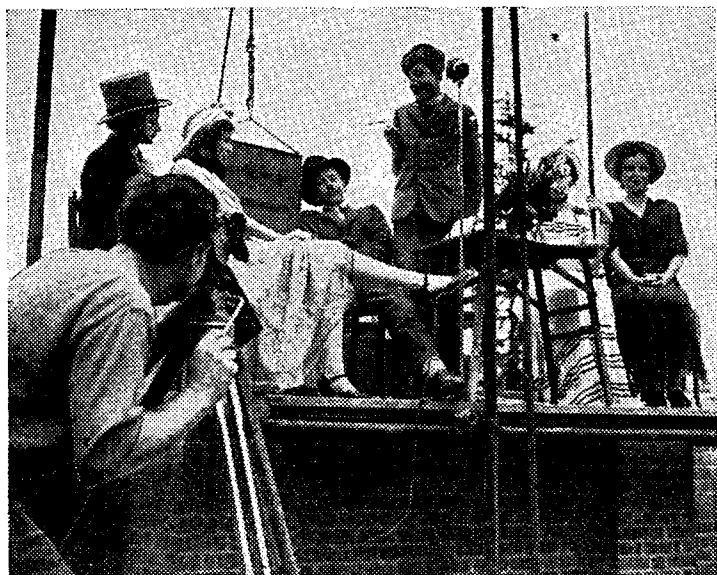
JIMMY COWAN, aged 16, of Ashington, in Northumberland, was due to sit for his School Certificate Examination at Morpeth, six miles away. Owing to a bus strike, however, Jimmy found that he would have to make his own travel arrangements. So, unlike Shakespeare's schoolboy who went "like snail unwillingly to school," Jimmy donned racing shorts and ran the six miles to school. He quickly changed into a suit which the headmaster lent him and managed to get through all his papers.

Jimmy then changed into his shorts and ran back home.

The Miner



Mr Barney Seale puts the finishing touches to his 12-foot statue of a miner. It is to be placed at the entrance to the All Wales and Monmouthshire Exhibition which opens on August 26 at Olympia.



Making a School Film

The pupils of Pendragon Hall, Reading, who make their own films, are here seen enacting a scene for their latest production with their headmaster as cameraman.

REBUILDING HIS HOME TOWN

WITH the recent opening of the first batch of new houses for London's terribly blitzed West Ham—every one of its 51,000 houses was damaged and 14,000 of them were completely destroyed—one of the sons of the borough saw the first blossoming of a boyhood dream.

A quarter of a century ago a certain schoolboy, who was born and brought up in West Ham, showed an early bent for architecture and planning; and before he left his school desk he plotted and planned a new West Ham. The squalor and congestion of the horrible slums in his home town appalled him; and on Sundays, as he watched the crowds who had left their hovels to stroll down to the riverside in search of fresher air, he dreamed of the day when they would have space and comfort and freedom in their own homes.

That boy, Thomas North, is now town planning officer to West Ham. He is devoted to the writings of Dickens, and the great work of reconstruction he

is accomplishing in his own native town was largely inspired by that novelist's exposures and criticisms of the old West Ham which, only now, after a terrible war, is beginning to change its ugly aspect for one of freedom and comparative beauty.

Some of the councillors of West Ham have known Thomas North since boyhood and were delighted when he was appointed to his present position; and their faith in him is being fully rewarded.

A visit to this great borough, in which he is coping with the gigantic task of housing 167,000 people, will show, besides houses, the provision of parks, excellent schools and community and health centres.

Thomas North has made the building of a new West Ham his goal in life. Slowly, but surely, the great work is shaping—the work of a man expressing himself in a task conceived in youth, a task for the benefit of London and for the betterment of mankind.

The Tate is Fifty

LOOKING out across the Thames, about half a mile from the Houses of Parliament, stands the Tate Gallery, stately, home of modern British art. It is always prominent in the London scene, but this week it is specially so, for July 21 is its 50th anniversary.

The gallery is named after its founder, Sir Henry Tate, who made a fortune out of sugar and spent it in good works. He was a great patron of British art, and at his house at Streatham, where every year he used to give a banquet for prominent artists, he had a fine gallery of modern paintings.

In 1889 Sir Henry presented 65 of these pictures to the nation, and a year or so later gave the princely sum of £80,000 to provide a gallery of modern British painting. The site of old Millbank Prison was eventually chosen, and on July 21, 1897, the Tate Gallery was opened.

Sir Henry Tate saw the fulfilment of a wish that had been close to his heart for many years. There, in the spacious gallery which he had so generously provided for the benefit of all, were the cherished pictures from his own collection, alongside 64 purchased under the Chantrey bequest, 18 presented by G. F. Watts, and about 100 from the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square.

Since the passing of Sir Henry Tate, in 1899, other benefactors have added both to the collections and to the buildings, notably Lord Duveen and his father, and the Tate is now one of the foremost picture galleries in this country. But this week visitors to the Tate Gallery (still, alas, like so many London buildings, bearing the scars of war) will give a special salute to the memory of Sir Henry Tate, the rich man who spent his money so nobly.

A Battle in a Church

CHOIRBOYS in the Parish Church of Alton, in Hampshire, recently found bullets which are relics of a thrilling fight in the church during the Civil War, when a last stand was made in the pulpit by a cavalier—the "renowned Martialist Richard Boles of ye Right Worshipful Family of Boles in Linckhorne Sheire, Colonell of a Ridgmont of foot . . ." as a brass in the church describes him.

It was on a frosty night in December 1643 that Colonel Boles was at Alton with about 500 Royalist soldiers, mostly wild Welshmen and wilder Irishmen. During the night 5000 Roundheads surrounded the little town and attacked in the cold dawn. A loyal Alton citizen set fire to his own house so that the smoke might confuse the enemy. Under cover of this the Royalists withdrew to a hill near the church. Here they fought bravely from dawn till noon, but were forced back into the churchyard. Finally, about 80 of them barricaded themselves inside the church, and there the colonel called on them to fight to the last.

The Roundheads' cannon battered down the door and they poured in. The defenders had piled their dead horses in the aisles for barricades, but soon 60 of them were dead and the remainder, except Colonel Boles, surrendered. The heroic colonel fought on, thrusting and parrying, retreating step by step to the pulpit and, as the brass tells us, "Slew with his sword six or seven of them and then was Slayn himself."

When King Charles heard of his death, the memorial relates, he cried: "Bring me a mourning scarf, I have Lost one of the best commanders in this kingdom."

Dinnertime



These eight six-week-old Golden Labrador pups are obviously delighted when mealtime comes, even though their tails do not wag in unison.

The Editor's Table

YOUTH STEPS OUT

FROM the ends of the earth youth is marching out to meet the youth of other nations at two great summer conferences—at Prague and Oslo; for however divided by national boundaries and racial divisions youth may be, it shares a common urge to meet the people "across the water" and "look over the fences" to greet its neighbours.

Oslo and Prague are staging gatherings which draw youth into the centre of the conflicting issues which dominate human life. These conferences will be training-grounds for future leaders in many walks of life who will draw inspiration from meeting young men and women of other nations.

THE Prague gathering has been arranged by the World Federation of Democratic Youth. Oslo concentrates on a great gathering of over 1300 young people from all over the world which is an impressive demonstration of the loyalty to Christian truth shown by so many different races.

Youth is eager to meet youth. That is the clear fact that strikes anyone reading the papers prepared for these conferences. In every land vitality, hope, and vision are bound up in the rising generation; and neither the mistakes of the past nor the gloom of the present can damp the spirits of the young men and women who gather in Oslo and Prague this summer, any more than they can damp the spirits of the world's Boy Scouts who are having their own special gathering, the Jamboree, in Paris next month. They have clear eyes and hopeful hearts, and their first impulse is to step out and meet the youth of other lands.

YOUTH also wants to speak its mind; that is the second great fact of these conferences. Many things said will shock those who are "older and better," but that will all be part of the process of speaking-out which is youth's privilege. This is the day for plain speaking, and there will be eager watchers the world over for words of wisdom and hope from the lips of youth. These conferences meet at a critical time—while mankind is re-shaping its life and preparing to launch out in new adventures; and youth is determined to make its voice heard.

BUT youth is also going to dream and hope at these world gatherings. They have radiant visions of better and fairer times to come, and so they should have. To believe in the "stuff of dreams" is part of the glory of growing-up in a world still beautiful and full of wonder. To dream and hope is the right of youth, and from these conferences should come a refreshing stream of noble ideas.



The C N wishes long life and happiness to Philip Mountbatten, RN, whose

Haydn and Hitler

NOT often nowadays do we think of Adolf Hitler, but we were reminded of him recently in the most unlikely manner.

Having occasion to consult a music reference book to check a fact concerning Haydn's Toy Symphony, we were interested to learn that it was composed in 1788 for some toy instruments bought by him at a fair in—of all places—Berchtesgaden!

Strange it is to think of these two men linked across the years in this way.

Strange it is to think of Papa Haydn writing music inspired by a visit to the very place where, a century and a half later, Hitler, indulging his self-glorification in a luxurious chalet, was planning to conquer the world—Haydn the composer, who left a legacy for the delight of all mankind, and his fellow-countryman Hitler the Tyrant, whose legacy was untold suffering and misery for countless millions.

FRUITFUL SERVICE

HE gave it for his opinion, that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together.

Dean Swift

Under the E

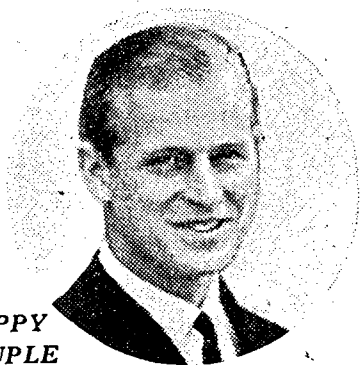
HOLIDAY-MAKERS at the seaside were hit by storms. They went out for a blow.

AN American has been giving us a pat on the back. Not a pat of butter.

THE world-wide problem is when do we eat? says a writer. And what.



TRAVELLING is much easier when you can carry your own luggage, says a writer. Depends how heavy it is.



OPY
IPLE

ess to Princess Elizabeth and Lieut
gagement has given universal delight

THINGS SAID

A SOLID and lasting buttress of England's industrial greatness has been built in Bradford out of wool and sweat and skill.

Lord Nathan

THE spirit of comradeship and brotherhood, I believe, can yet become the dominating force which can triumph over racialism and division.

Ernest Bevin

I APPEAL to all nations and to all peoples to break down the artificial barriers that separate them.

President Truman

Playing Fields For All

THE Duke of Wellington, who is president of the London and Greater London Playing Fields Association, has defended the steps taken to preserve certain London open spaces which were being sought for housing. Playing fields and organised games were necessary to combat juvenile delinquency, he said; and, moreover, in neighbourhoods where children have nowhere to play, a working agreement must be found whereby a private ground could be used on days when it was free, provided that care was taken to prevent damage and litter.

The CN is in complete sympathy with both of these points made by the duke. All children, whether they live in city, town, or village, must have green open spaces on which to play. It is their birthright.

Editor's Table

PETER PUCK
WANTS TO KNOW

If the man with a
running tap caught
it



A MOTHER says she cannot keep her boy in shoes. And he is too big for his boots.

A HOUSEWIFE who lives on the top of a hill says she cannot get anything delivered. Wants her case taken up.

FRUIT can be grown on an allotment. But it is better on trees.

A TOWN Councillor has had the courage to change his mind. Hope he has got a better one.

World War on Ignorance

THE great campaign which Unesco—the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation—is undertaking to rebuild the world's war-shattered cultural life was described recently in Paris by Mr Walter H. G. Laves, Deputy Secretary-General of the Organisation.

"During a war," said Mr Laves, "all the strenuous efforts being made towards victory demand a subordination of the abstract and creative faculties except in so far as they contribute towards victory. It is thus one of Unesco's most urgent tasks to help restore those aspects of human activity."

But Unesco is not content only to restore; it wishes to improve on what existed before. Unesco is setting up Field Science Co-operation Offices in districts far from the main centres of science and technology in their respective countries. It has joined in the fight against illiteracy "which blankets more than half the population of the world"; and in this struggle Unesco is already at work.

Unesco is more than a lofty aspiration; it is a living reality getting down to practical things.

JULY

JULY breathes hot, sallows the crispy fields,
Curls up the wan leaves of the lilac hedge,
And every eve cheats us with show of clouds
That braise the horizon's western rim, or hang
Motionless.

Lowell

Old Songs Remembered

ANY American now may write to the Recording Laboratory of the Library of Congress and get a recording of that old song he remembers from his boyhood. The words of a haunting refrain, or the old lilt of a familiar tune, can be recalled through a system of 12,000 records, the result of the work of John and Alan Lomax, who for years have toured the United States with recording apparatus, searching out the folk songs of the American people.

Recorded in cabins and fields, many of the records are simple and amateurish in their style, but all of them are real and homely. There are the songs of Negroes, cowboys, railroad men, farmers, and schoolchildren—all the favourite, friendly songs sung at parties, meetings, festivals, and by the fireside at home; and in the great Library of Congress they are neatly filed and available to all.

How splendid it would be for us all if this refreshing American idea could be emulated here.

JUST AN IDEA

As Emerson wrote, Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood.

Pied Piper Wanted

FARMER DAVID STRACHAN, of Nandaly in Victoria, had to stay in his bed because mice had eaten through his wooden leg. He was one of the many sufferers in the mouse plague which recently swept the Mallee and Wimmera district.

When interviewed, Farmer Strachan complained that not only had the mice immobilised him but were continuing their work of destruction by eating his furniture. "Until I get a new leg from Melbourne," he said, "all I have to do is to sit in the house and watch them eat the furniture. And they're doing that very effectively."

Farmers in other Victorian towns have reported odd capers by hordes of mice. Thousands frolicked round cats too full to bother them, dodged sweeping brooms and went on nibbling, and ran over sleeping dogs. Some farmers estimate that the mice cleaned up all unprotected stubble, hay, and fruit in 4000 square miles of the Wimmera and Mallee.

Radar For a Liner



Fitting the radar equipment for the Queen Mary, which is to make its first post-war voyage as a passenger liner next week.

JANE COBDEN

RICHARD COBDEN, the great and selfless statesman whose name lives in English history as the Founder of Free Trade and for his labours in connection with the repeal of the Corn Laws, was born in 1804 and died as long ago as 1865.

It was with some surprise, therefore, that we learned of the death only the other day of his last surviving child, Jane.

She passed away at Haslemere, not many miles from the lovely corner of Sussex where sleep her famous father, her mother, her sisters, and also her only brother, whose untimely end while still a schoolboy was the crowning sorrow of the statesman's life.

Jane Cobden, who afterwards married T. Fisher Unwin, the publisher, won a little fame of her own in politics; she was one of the first women active in local Government affairs, and in 1888, when the London County Council was first formed, she was one of the only two women elected.

AFRICA AS A LARDER

Filling a Continent's Vacant Shelves

SUMMED-UP in a few words, the aim of the Government's proposal for a Colonial Development Corporation (with borrowing powers of £100,000,000) is to make Greater Britain the British Larder. More particularly it is to develop Africa so as to obtain the grain and the fats so sorely needed.

Africa catches the eye as a likely place to establish a larder; firstly because it is the continent in which Great Britain has the biggest holding, and secondly because it is the emptiest. The British holding is are fewer to the square mile than anywhere else.

A first step was taken in West Africa by making the land the property of the native owner; another in Uganda, where most of the fertile lands in Buganda are owned in freehold by natives, and all land there is Crown property held in trust for the native inhabitants. Here, as elsewhere, the aim will be to raise the standards and the productive energies of the Africans.

Land of Opportunity

There is the widest area of opportunity in Kenya, where the prosperity of everyone depends on agriculture and cattle-husbandry; in Nyasaland, a poor country but entirely dependent on its agriculture; and in Tanganyika, where there are 6,000,000 native-owned cattle, though the main resource is in agriculture.

South-West Africa is hampered by the Kalahari desert, but in Bechuanaland, the Okavango Marshes, if drained by a canal system, would afford a very big area that could be transformed into the most wonderful grain-producing country in southern Africa. Most of these areas attract our attention because of the grain, the maize, and the wheat they produce; but though they offer "bread to strengthen man's heart," that is not all—or nearly all. The Africans grow a variety of crops for their own food, and in Uganda the greater part of the population live not on cereals, but on bananas. In Tanganyika, also, just by Lake Victoria, the staple crop is banana.

Africans are in truth Africa's greatest asset—man-power. In Uganda there are 4,000,000; in Kenya 3,500,000; in Nyasaland 2,000,000; and there is no need to continue here the list, because the African outnumbers all others everywhere, whether the area is

administered by British or Dutch, French or Portuguese. With them, as with us, the task is to bring the native to the level of his opportunity.

The opportunity is here and now. Africa is not a land of maize and wheat, or of ground nuts, lately so abundantly extolled; it has other wealth of highest worth. The "cattle on a thousand hills" are the most obvious example; they are numbered in millions, native-owned; in South-West Africa there are sheep also, and if their products do not yet compare with Australian wool, or New Zealand's Canterbury lamb, let it be remembered that neither Australia nor New Zealand ever saw sheep till we introduced them.

Let another thing be kept in mind. Africa, the continent of great deserts, is also the continent of great waters, great lakes, great rivers—the Niger, the Congo, the Zambesi. The deserts may yet be made to blossom as the rose; the dust of the desert, of which our soldiers saw too much in the North African campaign, has lately been transported in sacks to Alexandria to reveal itself as a fertile soil.

There are also forest areas to grow all the timber that Britain or Europe wants, and increasing means of transporting this and such other needs as rubber or cotton or eggs and butter.

United States of Africa?

Lastly, although so large an area of Africa was coloured red by Cecil Rhodes, other areas are wisely administered by Dutch and French, Belgian and Portuguese. The contribution that Britain is now offering for the development of her share is one "to establish or assist any enterprise to increase the present productive capacity." It is not too much to hope that this friendly effort may awake response in all those areas—Angola, French Equatorial Africa, and the Belgian Congo. There yet may be not only a United States of America, but a United States of Europe and a United States of Africa.



THIS ENGLAND

A haymaking scene by the old church of St Peter at Britford, near Salisbury

Four a Penny

Must the Farthing Go?

ONLY the other day we were looking at a tiny, hundred-years-old coin and wondering what people used to buy with it. It was a quarter-farthing! But the same thought must cross the minds of many as they look at a little present-day coin—the farthing—on which Jenny Wren sits so perkily, and an MP has asked that the Treasury should banish it altogether in view of the fact that it now has little monetary value.

Well, we should be loth to see the farthing go, even if the days have long since departed when sweetshops offered quite an assortment in exchange for one—from an ounce of "stickjaw" to a strip of Spanish or even a lucky bag.

The farthing has a long history and can be traced from the Anglo-Saxon penny, known as early as 688. This coin was of silver deeply impressed with the sign of a cross, so that it could easily be broken and divided into the halfling (halfpenny) and the fourthling or farthing.

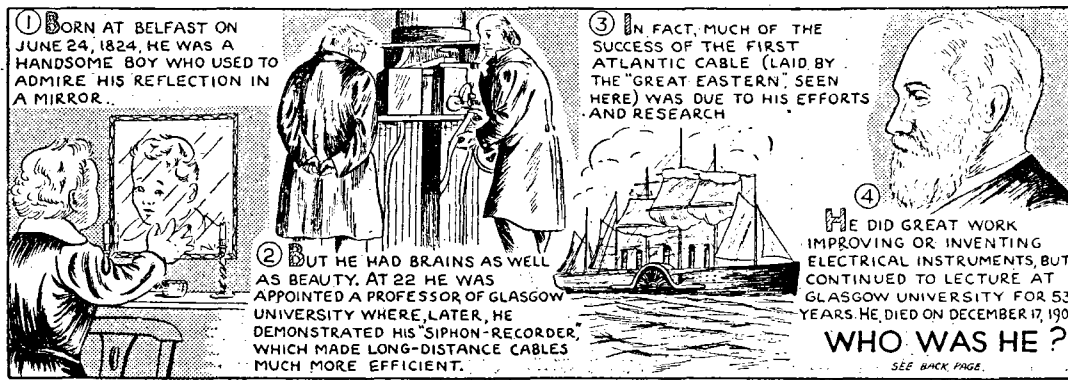
It was first minted as a separate coin in silver in the reign of Edward I, and it remained a silver coin until the time of Mary Tudor. James I granted a 17-year monopoly to Frances Duchess of Richmond to coin farthings, but these were copper coins.

Farthings came into the coinage again in the days of Charles II, in 1665 and 1672, when there was a large issue of copper money. In 1860 it became a standard bronze coin, and so it has remained until our time.

GOOD SAMARITANS

KNOWN as the "Good Samaritans," a number of young people at Plymouth have banded together for the purpose of brightening old people's lives. They visit their homes and do anything for them, from writing letters to washing and shopping. The scheme is proving a great success, and has not only brought sunshine and good cheer into the homes of lonely people, but has united a group of youthful workers in a good purpose which has given them surprising happiness and satisfaction.

Who Was He?



DOWN IN THE WITCH'S SCULLERY

THERE is more news of strange adventures underwater, underground. Not long ago a party of divers went down into the dark waters of the River Axe, which flows through the famous Wookey Hole cave in the Mendip Hills in Somerset.

They descended near the awe-inspiring figure called the Witch of Wookey, a stalagmite formation which in the course of thousands of years has become human in shape and sits, brooding eternally like some great image of Buddha, in a cavern 100 feet high.

The submerged chamber which the divers explored is called the Witch's Scullery, lying between two large caverns known as the Witch's Kitchen and the Witch's Parlour, and they found there, half-buried in the sand at the bottom of the river, human skulls and other bones which, it is

estimated, have lain there for over 1800 years.

Discoveries like these may help archaeologists to piece together the real story of the Witch of Wookey—a story, we may imagine, of ancient British tribesmen gripped by superstitious fears at the thought of the weird statue, and of some of them meeting their end in this grim underworld.

Herbert Balch of Wells, one of the first men to begin exploring these caves, in 1885 found near the Witch the complete skeleton of a woman, and close by the bones of a goat and kid together with a milking bowl and a sacrificial knife. He thought that these might explain the witch legend. Had this woman, in pre-Roman times, lived alone in this eerie place as a witch, or priestess of the figure? The remains of a tethering-stall were near the

bones. Perhaps she had lived on the goat's milk. Perhaps she fell ill in this dark hermitage, and, shunned in terror by the people outside, died alone. Whatever may be the truth of her life and death, there her bones had lain undisturbed for hundreds of years.

In 1934 Herbert Balch made another strange discovery. A drought had brought the underground river to the lowest level ever known, and he and two others were able to row in a boat into a previously unknown cavern. Their electric lamps revealed on the walls the initials of two other visitors and the date 1611. No one knows who were these daring explorers who, at a time when witchcraft was still believed in, ventured into the Wookey Witch's mysterious realm.

It is a realm that still holds many secrets.

NOTE. In a recent article the CN described La Dent de Crolles in Savoie, 1740 feet deep, as the deepest underground abyss so far explored anywhere in the world. A reader has kindly written to tell us of three deeper cave-abyssees in Italy. They are: Abisso della Preta, 2090 feet, which was scaled in 1926 by a group of cave-explorers of Verona; Antro della Carchia, 1775 feet, which the Florentine Grotto Group explored in 1934; and Abisso di Verco, 1760 feet, explored in 1928 by the Alpine Society of Julian Venetia, Trieste.

AUSTRALIA COUNTS HER PEOPLE

FOR the first time since 1933 Australia has been taking a census of her people. Even the hero of the famous song "Waltzing Matilda"—the jolly swagman—had to fill in forms giving details of abode, income, property, age, parentage and birthplace, writes an Australian correspondent.

As the "swaggie" usually owns only the boots, trousers, shirt, coat, and hat he roams in, and a bundle with blanket, billy-can, tobacco, tea, flour, and sugar, the

property details did not bother him!

For the census, each person's abode was his place of rest at midnight on June 29, and "swaggies" were classed as "campers out." So census returns will no doubt include such entries as "Under the mess shed at Casey's place," or "On the flat two miles out of Cooladdi."

At the last census, in 1933, Australia's population was 6,300,000. Recently it was estimated at almost 7,450,000.

Putty is Scarce

Finding a Substitute For Linseed Oil

TIME was when putty, that indispensable ally of the plumber, glazier, and painter, was sold over the counter at any paint shop at a penny a pound. Today, however, it is in short supply and the price is about 5d a pound.

The best putty is made from whiting, or powdered chalk, and linseed oil, though during the war years fish oil replaced the linseed; but that was sticky, bad to handle, and unsatisfactory as a "filler" for painters, taking the colour from paint applied over it.

Towards the end of the war a quantity of putty was made from contaminated linseed oil, which was a great improvement, but the experiment was not repeated. The story goes that when some linseed oil became available for use in food production (it comes to us from Russia, the U.S., India, and the Argentine) it was shipped to this country in tankers which had been carrying diesel oil. The containers had not been properly cleaned, and so the first consignment went for putty making.

Now there is again a world shortage of linseed oil. Required primarily for food products, it also has important industrial uses, especially for soaps, paints, and varnishes. A Government white paper on colonial research published this month holds out hope that a satisfactory substitute for it may at last have been found. The seeds of a Nigerian vine are being used for experiments in the laboratory of Professor Hilditch at Liverpool University, and the results are being carefully watched.

MATS FROM NOTTS

AT the village of Selston, Nottinghamshire, a number of disabled miners are using waste mosquito netting and flax, formerly used for stoking mill furnaces, for weaving gaily-coloured mats offered for sale under the name of Selston matting. It is hoped that before long 200 of these miners will be making 2500 mats weekly.

LORNA DOONE—R. D. Blackmore's Famous Romance of Exmoor, Told in Pictures



John would not hear of Lorna returning to the Doones. Then he revealed something that Jeremy had found out and told him—Lorna was not a Doone. Her father, the Earl of Dugal, had been killed in an accident in the Pyrenees when Lorna was little. Her mother, on returning to England, had been waylaid by the Doones, who robbed and murdered her and stole Lorna.



John's mother and sisters rejoiced that Lorna did not belong to the murderous Doone family. Their hopes rose, too, as days passed and the Doones made no attempt to attack the farm, now nearly defenceless. The news went round that the outlaws were strengthening their fortress, certain that, because they had dared to repulse the King's troops, stronger attack would be made on them.



John felt it was safe for him to go and take part in a wrestling match at Bodmin. When he returned, he found that Lorna had gone. For, hearing that Lorna was alive, officers of the Court of Chancery had come to take her away to live with her great-uncle, Earl Brandir, until she was 21 and could take possession of her parents' rich estates.



The estates of the Countess of Dugal had been in Chancery while Lorna's fate was unknown. She had left a letter for John assuring him of her love. But John was downcast and asked how a farmer could hope to marry a countess! Months passed and no message came from Lorna in London.

Can Lorna have deserted John? See next week's instalment of this thrilling story

Earth's Path Through Space

By the CN Astronomer

NOT far from overhead in the evening may now be seen Vega, the brightest star in the Northern skies. It is a beautiful bluish-white sun nearly two-and-a-half times greater in diameter than our yellowish Sun; but it is 1,707,850 times farther away.

Vega is also the leading star of the charming little constellation of Lyra, the Lyre, whose chief stars may be easily identified from the accompanying star-map. These stars not only represent a musical instrument but also a bird; the two have thus been linked from early times.

To the Phoenicians and Greeks the constellation was primarily regarded as a musical instrument, as the Lute of Orpheus to the Greeks; but to the early Chaldeans it was a bird. The constellation is of great interest, containing the marvels of the Ring Nebula, the wonderful egg-shaped suns of Beta-in-Lyra, and the superb quartette of suns composing Epsilon-in-Lyra, two of which can be glimpsed with good eyesight. Most impressive of all is the fact that it is up there and a little way to the right of these stars that the Sun, the Earth, and all the Solar System are speeding. The region known technically as the *Solar Apex* is indicated by a X on the map.

Travelling at an average speed of about 730 miles a minute, our whole Solar System of planets, moons, and comets, together with the Sun, are speeding towards this celestial symbol of music, the only constellation dedicated to music in the Heavens. As Vega is approaching, and the distance between our Sun and Vega is diminishing by about 550 miles every minute, Vega will in the course of ages appear still brighter; but as the star's course is at a tangent to that of our Sun, they can never come close.

This point to which our Sun at present appears to be speeding will also change its position in the course of long ages, because our Sun's path (and, in fact, that of all the stars) consists of great curves; for nothing travels geometrically straight in space or in a geometric circle so as to return to the place that it previously occupied.

Ever Speeding On

When we think and speak of the Earth travelling round the Sun back to where it was a year ago, we refer to the place the Earth occupied in its orbit relative to the Sun. The Sun is like a ship speeding on a long never-ending and curved course, with the Earth and other planets like smaller vessels travelling round it, alternately faster and slower, and with the moons like little boats round the planets with motions still more involved relative to space and the Sun; but all are harmoniously timed to be in their allotted places to the fraction of a second, as they all speed onwards to this celestial Lyre.

G. F. M.

REVIVING THE GLORIES OF BAGHDAD

AT the request of the Iraq Government, a distinguished English educationist, Dr A. E. Morgan, is drawing up plans for the establishment of a university in ancient Baghdad.

When the land which we used to know as Mesopotamia changed its name to Iraq, one of the great dreams of King Faisal the First, who came to the throne in 1921 and died in 1933, was that his capital, Baghdad, should become once more the seat of learning it had been in ancient times. Today, with plans in the making for a new University of Baghdad, his dream may be realised.

Yearning For Education

Ever since its release from the Ottoman yoke, this Arab land of Iraq has yearned for education—a yearning not confined to the townsmen but shared equally by the fellahin (peasants) and by the bedouin (nomads). Much has already been done, and in some respects, particularly in medicine and law, Iraqis have attained a high standard; but generally their young men go abroad to complete their education, mostly to the American University at Beirut, in the Lebanon, or to Western European Universities.

Though they look forward ardently, however, Iraqis never cease to remember the glories of Baghdad, recalling the time when this city had, as an Arab historian says, "no peer throughout the whole world." Their minds go back a long way—as far as the eighth century A.D. in fact.

A succession of enlightened Arab rulers, of whom the most renowned was Haroun al Raschid, central figure of The Arabian Nights, kept Baghdad as the centre of the civilised world until the 13th century, when Iraq was overrun by the Mongols, who so ruined its great irrigation system that the country lay stagnant until recent years.

At that time Baghdad was rich—very rich—its merchants travelled afar. Arab coins have recently been found in Russia, Finland, Sweden, and Germany,

and the adventures of Sindbad the Sailor, who set out from the Iraq port of Basra, are indisputably founded on fact.

But it was not so much the material wealth as the intellectual splendour of Baghdad that astonished the world and still kindles Arab imagination. All kinds of books which might otherwise have perished were translated into Arabic—from Greek, Sanskrit, Syriac, and Persian. The Arabs became the intellectual heirs of the peoples they conquered or encountered. Their capacity to absorb was inexhaustible, and all educated Arabs at that time were able to read the philosophical works of Aristotle or the medical works of Galen, while the West, or the former Greco-Roman world, had forgotten them.

Arabic is a marvellous language for expression. Before Mohammed it was chiefly a language for poetry, but in the few centuries after the Prophet it was devoted chiefly to religion. By the tenth century, however, it had in Baghdad become the medium, above all others, for expressing philosophical and scientific ideas. And besides their enormous work of translation, Arabic scholars contributed much original thought to the world.

Unrivalled Magnificence

Of course, there is a certain amount of romance mixed up in the legends of medieval Baghdad, just as, for instance, there is in the stories of Charlemagne. But enough is established to show that Baghdad was unrivalled, and that its magnificence (of which, by the way, not one material trace remains today) was such as to take a visitor's breath away.

No wonder is it, then, that modern, independent Iraq wants to revive some of Baghdad's former glories.

SEEING HOW WE TEACH

IT is encouraging to know that British enthusiasm for Education is beginning to attract the world's attention. Recently visitors, mostly teachers, from Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Syria came to England to see something of our educational system. They attended a two-week course at Stratford-on-Avon organised by the British Council. They visited schools at Stratford, Ilmington, and King Edward V School, Birmingham.

During their course they discussed our 1944 Educational Act.

Coventry Cathedral

BLITZED Coventry Cathedral, of which only the great tower, the spire, and some outer walls remain, is to rise again—and soon, it is hoped.

Lord Harlech's commission propose that a new cathedral, in the English Gothic tradition, shall be built round the ruin, with the old tower and spire preserved as a proud monument and beloved landmark. They also suggest that the new cathedral shall be smaller than the old one.

Future Colliery Experts

IN the future boys who wish to enter the coal-mining industry to become mechanics, electricians, surveyors, skilled miners, and colliery officials will have to begin their training at school.

The Ministry of Education has advised local authorities that training schemes should be devised. It is suggested that the future entrant to the mining industry should take a technical course of which the basis would be simple geology, the application of chemistry and physics to mining, and the linking of general subjects to the life of a mining community.

WEIGHTY PROBLEM

WHEN David Ballard of New York decided to take a trip to Boston not long ago, transport officials found they had a weighty problem on their hands; for Mr Ballard stands 7½ feet in his socks, and weighs 27 stone!

Special seating arrangements to counter-balance his weight had to be made on the plane, while he filled two seats in the helicopter taxi from the Boston airport.

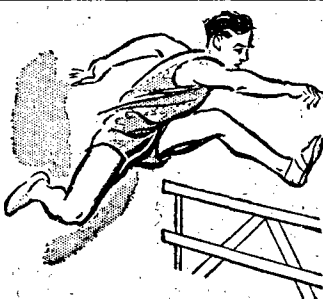
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BY APPOINTED BAKERS

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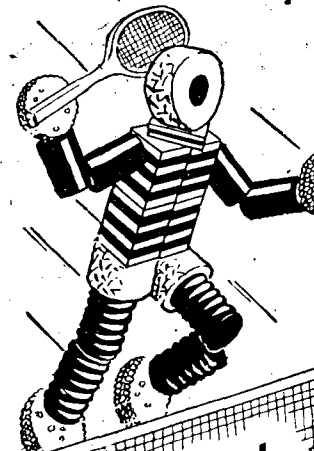
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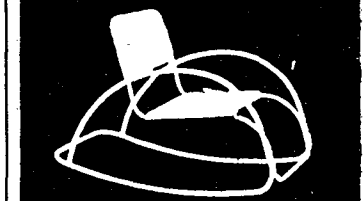
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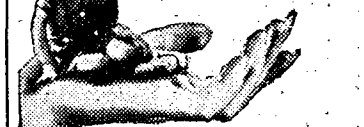


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THE BRAN TUB

HASTY RETREAT

A MAN rushed breathlessly on to the platform just as the train steamed out.

"Did you want to catch that train?" asked a sleepy-looking porter.

"Of course not," said the would-be passenger. "I was just chasing it out of the station."

Tongue Twister

Six long slim slick slender saplings.

TEETHING TROUBLES

THERE was an old man of Tarentum

Who gnashed all his teeth till he bent 'em;

When they asked him the cost Of what he had lost,

He replied "I can't say, for I rent 'em."

Maxim to Memorise

THE tongue of an idle person is never idle.

A Catch Question

HERE is a simple little poser with an easy answer, but it will probably catch many of your friends.

Ask them to divide £1 into shillings and sixpences so that there is one more sixpence than there are shillings.

The answer is, of course, that the pound is divided into thirteen shillings and fourteen sixpences, but it is surprising how few people get the correct answer straight away.

Who Was He?

THE man in the picture story on page six was Lord Kelvin.

BEDTIME CORNER

The Donkey Ride

IT was the first day of the holidays at the seaside. After their bathe the children ran races, then sat basking on the warm sand, discussing what to do next.

"Let's build a castle," suggested Hilda. "I'm longing to try my new spade."

"Shrimps!" said Baby, clutching his tiny net.

"We must wait for low tide for shrimping," said Frank.

"Oh, look—there's a man with a donkey. Let's ask Mother if we may have rides."

Mother said yes, if they were careful, and she would look after Baby. So they paid their sixpences, and four-year-old Susan had the first ride. She was a little nervous, and the man led the donkey rather slowly.

Hilda tried next; she managed quite well, and even let the donkey trot at a good pace, while the man ran alongside.

"I am going to ride quite by myself," announced Frank when his turn came, and though Hilda and the man thought he was rather too bold, he mounted the donkey and set off in great style.

Neddy found it a pleasant change not to be led by the bridle, and broke into a canter. His rider, very pleased with

himself, turned round in the saddle to wave to the others, when suddenly the donkey came to a standstill on the brink of a wide stream flowing across the beach.

Head-over-heels tumbled Frank into the water, while

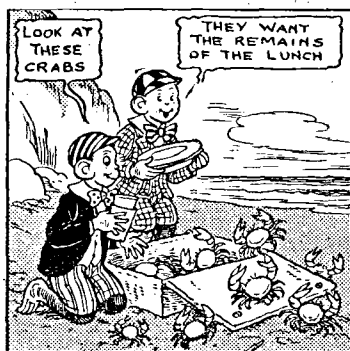


the children and the donkey-man ran up laughing heartily, for Frank was quite unhurt, though wet through and very much surprised.

As the little boy ruefully picked himself up out of the shallow stream, the donkey looked at him, as if to say:

"Why did he do that, I wonder? Surely he didn't expect me to jump that wide river?"

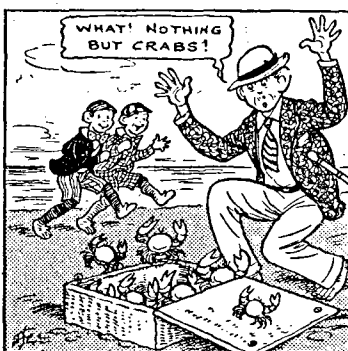
Jacko's Idea of a Crab Luncheon



The crabs were soon after the scraps in Jacko and Chimp's lunch basket.



So was Brother Adolphus—but he did not know they were only scraps.



However, he soon found out why he was welcomed so cordially.

FARMER GRAY EXPLAINS

Pigeons' Milk. "Pigeons' milk!" hooted Don derisively. "Fancy believing that rubbish."

"I'm not so sure it is rubbish," answered Ann hotly.

"Don't quarrel, children," said Farmer Gray. "What is the trouble?"

"Ann thinks she can have a glass of pigeons' milk," chuckled Don.

"Never mind, Ann, it's a very old joke," smiled the farmer. "Squabs, as young pigeons are called, feed by putting their heads down their mothers' throats, and taking half-digested food. It is a creamy fluid, and is called pigeons' milk."

Jumbled-Novelists

IF the letters of the following phrases are properly rearranged, they will spell the names of six English novelists.

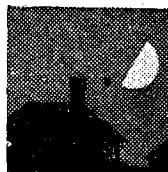
RIDE THEM SUN TEA
FLING DIE OR BENT
CHARY KATE ROLL POET

Answer next week

Other Worlds

IN the evening Jupiter is in the south-west. In the morning

Mars is in the south-east. The picture shows the moon as it may be seen at 10.30 on the evening of Friday, July 25.



- Can an Adder Add?

Does a lion lie on things?
Does an emu mew?
Is a llama an alarmer?
Is a gnu quite new?
Does a panda really pander?
Does a cheetah cheat?
Can an adder really add?
And is a wheatear wheat?
Does an antelope elope?
Does a buffalo low?
And does a mandrill drill all day?
Please tell me. I don't know.

ENIGMA

COLLECT a bird, a mother sheep,
A length of cloth, a British river,
And you will have a pleasant month
When skies are blue, and none should shiver.
Answer next week

Children's Hour

BBC programmes from Wednesday, July 23, to Tuesday, July 29.

WEDNESDAY, 5.0 Toytown Goes West. 5.30 For Your Bookshelf. Northern Ireland, 5.0 Nature Diary. Scottish, 5.30 Pig-Paf-Poltrie—a story; Weather Signs. Welsh, 5.0 The Adventures of David; A Queensferry School Choir; Sea Dogs—a talk.

THURSDAY, 5.0 Serenade for Children. 5.30 Endless, the Seafaring Manx Cat. Midland, 5.0 A day in Great Yarmouth; Malvern Girls College Orchestra. Scottish, 5.30 A Story. North, 5.0 Ereik and Enide.

FRIDAY, 5.0 Biffer (Part 3); She shall have Music (Part 3).

SATURDAY, 5.0 The Jelly Detective—a story; A Minstrel Show; My Dutch Friends. West, 5.0 Taken for a Ride—a story. 5.15 Once a Month. 5.45 Figureheads—a talk. North, 5.0 Young Artists; A Book Quiz.

SUNDAY, 5.0 Lob Lies by the Fire—a play.

MONDAY, 5.0 Rusty Fox goes to the Banquet—a story; Choir of Coaton Secondary Modern School, Greenford. 5.40 News from the Zoo. Midland, 5.0 A Bobby Brewster story; Children in other lands—Venice. Scottish, 5.0 Wee Willie Winkie. Your Own Ideas; The Birdman. West, 5.0 A story. 5.45 Shore Pools—a talk.

TUESDAY, 5.0 Film Competition results. 5.25 Nature Parliament. N. Ireland, 5.0 The Gentle Mountain (Part 4); A story; Songs. Scottish, 5.0 Songs; Tales of a Grandfather (4). West, 5.0 Story and Music.

BEAUTIFUL PEBBLES

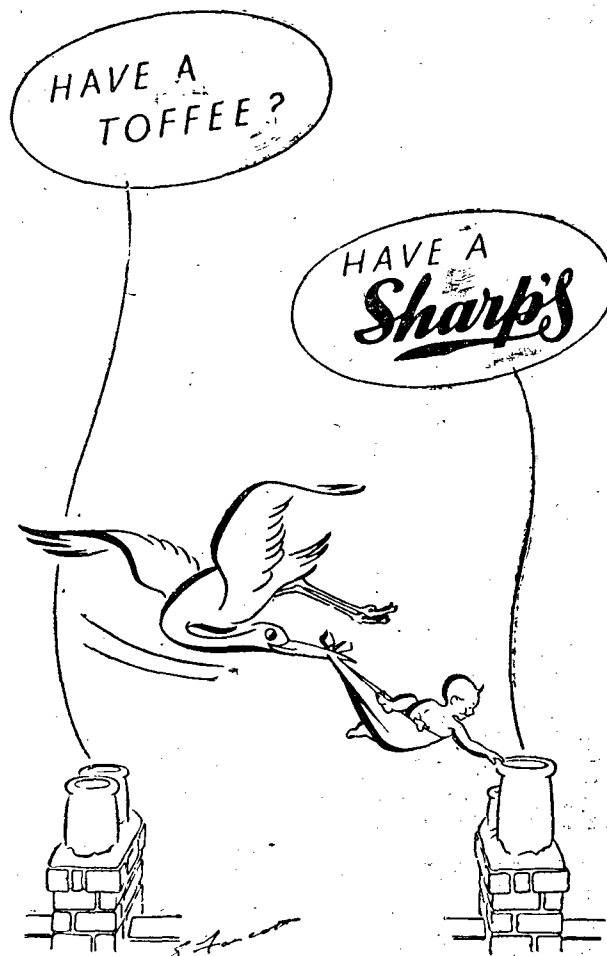
BEAUTIFULLY-COLOURED pebbles are often found on the beach, but when they are allowed to dry they seem dull and uninteresting. Here is a simple way of treating them so that they will be as bright as though they were wet. First rinse the stone several times in fresh water to remove all the salt. Then allow the stone to dry and give it a coating of liquid gum. First paint half of the stone, and, when quite dry, paint the other half. When the gum sets it makes the colours of the stone bright and clear.

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

Hidden Birds

Rook, thrush, owl, wren, swift, crow, tern.

L	I	S	P	A	W	E
A	C	L	A	M	A	N
C	O	A	S	P	I	R
E	P	O	C	H	T	A
I	C	E	L	E	G	
A	N	T	B	E	R	E
D	I	A	D	E	M	S
D	O	V	E	C	O	T
N	E	W				



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